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STUDY OF THE PROGRESS OF FRESHMAN ENGLISH STUDENTS AT WINGATE COLLEGE.

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ALL FRESHMEN AT WINGATE COLLEGE, NORTH CAROLINA, HAVE BEEN REQUIRED TO TAKE ENGLISH 101, WITH SPECIAL 101R SECTIONS FOR THOSE WITH ENTRANCE EXAMINATION SCORES INDICATING A NEED FOR REMEDIAL WORK. BY MEETING FIVE HOURS WEEKLY INSTEAD OF THE USUAL THREE, THE ENGLISH 101R STUDENTS HAD THE BENEFIT OF MORE DIRECTION, PRACTICE, DRILL, AND GUIDANCE. IN 1965, A GROUP OF REMEDIAL STUDENTS WERE ENROLLED IN A SPECIALLY DESIGNED NONCREDIT ENGLISH 100 COURSE. AS COMPARED WITH THE 101R STUDENTS, GREATER PERCENTAGE OF THE ENGLISH 100 STUDENTS (1) GRADUATED, EVEN THOUGH AN EXTRA SEMESTER HAD BEEN REQUIRED OF THEM, (2) PERFORMED SATISFACTORILY IN SUBSEQUENT ENGLISH COURSES, AND (3) AVOIDED PROBATIONARY STATUS. (WO)

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STUDY OF THE PROGRESS OF FRESHMAN ENGLISH STUDENTS AT WINGATE COLLEGE

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CLEARINGHOUSE FOR
JUNIOR COLLEGE
INFORMATION

By Beverly B. Christopher and Frances C. Vick

Dr. Earle G. Eley in "The Tempe Report" acclaims that "without adequate remedial courses it is not possible to maintain college standards in regular transferable freshman English courses."

A need to study the presently existing remedial English program is suggested by Dr. William J. Scannell in his article "What Do Teachers Think About English in the Two Year College" (Junior College Journal, September, 1966). He states that a conference participant in California reported that 75 per cent of the freshmen attending his college were placed in remedial English classes. Indeed this large segment of the college population merits concerted attention.

Predating Dr. Scannell's article by some ten years was a four and one-half page Junior College Journal article titled "Remedial Work in English at Wingate Junior College" by Ethel Knott Smith, Instructor of English and Librarian. This article appeared in the March, 1956, issue. Since that time, twelve years ago, and perhaps before there has been much concern in this institution for the remedial work.

At Wingate there has been no English 101 designed especially for the two-year student. All freshmen students, whether two-year or transfer, have taken the same course.

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However, the students who indicated on entrance tests that they needed work of a nature and degree not possible under ordinary circumstances in regular English 101 courses have been placed in English 101R sections which have met six hours weekly instead of the regular three hours. These classes have met Monday, Wednesday, and Friday for one hour and Tuesday and Thursday for one and one-half hours. The English 101R course has carried three hours of credit just as the regular English 101 course. The basic difference between the two courses has been that in the English 101R course there was more opportunity for the student to receive assistance from his instructor, there was twice as much classroom time for more complete and detailed direction, more practice or drill in the fundamental grammar, and more guidance. An administrative effort has been made to provide instructors with breadth of knowledge concerning people, subject matter, methods, and techniques of teaching.

Placement has been made primarily on the basis of each student's present achievement in basic English skills indicated on the objective Iowa Placement Examinations and the writing sample. Teachers in cooperation with administrators have made the final decision on diagnosis and placement.

In the summer session of 1965 and the fall session of 1965 another experiment with a small segment of remedial students was tried. There were fifty-one students enrolled in two sections of English 100, classes which met three hours per week but carried no credit. Non-credit English 100 was taken prior

to the regular three hour credit English 101. The progress of these students as revealed by their records has been summarized in the table below. Also summarized are the findings concerning the 381 students who were enrolled in English 101R during the fall sessions of 1964 and 1965. Tabulations concerning the 982 students enrolled in English 101 are included for comparison purposes and to present a complete picture of the progress of the students during their two years at Wingate.

	ENGLISH 100	ENGLISH 101R	ENGLISH 101
Enrollment	51	381	982
"F" in English 101 or English 101R	6 (11.7%)	39 (9.8%)	42 (4.3%)
"D" in English 102 or Subsequent Courses	8 (15.8%)	107 (28.8%)	123 (12.5%)
"F" in English 102 or Subsequent Courses	1 (1.9%)	51 (13.3%)	93 (9.5%)
Withdrew after one semester	3 (5.8%)	23 (6%)	67 (6.9%)
Withdrew after two semesters	6 (11.6%)	80 (21%)	210 (22.1%)
Withdrew after three semesters		18 (4.7%)	54 (5.5%)
Withdrew after four semesters	5 (10%)	7 (1.7%)	47 (4.8%)
Adademically suspended after two semesters	1 (1.8%)	9 (2.2%)	17 (1.7%)
Graduated	29 (57%)	200 (53%)	604 (61.6%)
Non-Graduates of Wingate in 1967	22 (45%)	181 (47%)	378 (38.4%)
Phi Theta Kappa Members		5 (1.3%)	58 (5.9%)

It is noted that students who took English 100, the non-credit course, followed by English 101 were required to spend an additional semester or summer term to complete their college work. However, 57 per cent of these students graduated, whereas only 53 per cent of the English 101R students graduated.

Also it is observed that of the students who took English 100 and English 101, only 1.9 per cent failed a subsequent English course and only 15.8 per cent made "D" on an English course afterwards. However, of the students enrolled in English 101R, 13.3 per cent failed a subsequent English course and 28.8 per cent made "D" in a subsequent English course.

The study points out that students who spent an extra semester were compensated by the fact that they made much higher grades in other English courses taken. However, the difference in the percentage of graduates of the two groups was rather small.

A larger percentage of the 101R group was academically suspended, and a larger percentage of them did not graduate from Wingate though they remained in college for two years.

The study, though rather unbalanced because of the lack of more English 100 records for examination, indicates the merit in a non-credit course if students are willing to spend the added time and money required to take an extra semester of work.

Also the study indicates the great need for continuous improvement in instruction and further emphasis on grammar, the fundamentals of composition, mastery of the skills of <u>listening</u>, <u>reading</u>, <u>speaking</u>, and <u>writing</u> in the Freshman English program.

This will enable the student to do a better quality work in his subsequent English courses as well as in his other work and insure graduation.

Freshmen English instructors at Wingate must continue "to strive, to seek, to find" ways and means to give maximum assistance to those who need help in the art of communication.

James Michener has said "In his lifetime a man lives under 15 or 16 Presidents, but a good teacher comes into his life but rarely." What a challenge!

Comparative Test Results of Students Taking English 101 and English 101R (Fall, 1966)

English 101			English 101R		
Students	Grades	%	Students	Grades	%
61	90-100	9.50	2	90-100	1.40
302	80-90	47.00	24	80-90	17.00
227	70-80	35.30	78	70-80	55.20
36	65-70	5.60	22	65-70	16.30
12	60-65	1.87	11	60-65	7.80
4	50-60	.60	4	50-60	2.83
642 Total			141 Total		

Note: 7.23% of the English 101 group failed the test and 26.93% of the English 101R group failed it.

21% = "R" Students

Comparative California Test Results of Students in English 101 and English 101R (Fall, 1967)

English 101			English 101R		
Students	Grades	%	Students	Grades	%
7	165-170	1.3		165-170	
23	160-165	4.4		160-165	
59	155-160	11.3		155-160	
77	150-155	14.6	6	150-155	3.1
82	145-150	15.6	8	145-150	4.2
89	140-145	17.0	15	140-145	8.0
40	137-140	7.7	26	137-140	14.0
70	130-137	13.2	42	130-137	24.0
33	125-130	6.3	20	125-130	10.3
11	120-125	2.1	19	120-125	10.0
5	115-120	1.0	18	115-120	9.6
9	110-115	1.7	10	110-115	5.3
5	105-110	1.0	9	105-110	4.8
1	100-105	0.2	5	100-105	2.6
1	95-100	0.2	2	95-100	1.2
2	90-95	0.4	2	90-95	1.2
			1	85-90	.6
			3	80-85	1.5
522 Total			186 Total		

35% = "R" Students